## *Review of Faithful Fighters*

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*Published in:*
Journal of Asian Studies

*DOI:*
10.1017/S002191182000409X

*Publication date:*
2021

*Citation for published version (APA):*
Li, Y. (2021). Review of Faithful Fighters: Identity and Power in the British Indian Army. *Journal of Asian Studies*, *80*(1), 255. https://doi.org/10.1017/S002191182000409X

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*Journal:* (The Journal of Asian Studies)

*Manuscript:* JAS-80-1-TRANSNATIONAL-AND-COMPARATIVE-BookReviews

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The Journal of Asian Studies page 1 of 21, 2021.


# Book Review

## TRANSNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE

### *Frontier Encounters and State Formation in Northeast Asia*

*Making Borders in Modern East Asia: The Tumen River Demarcation*. By Nianshen Song. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 324 pp. ISBN: 9781316626290 (paper).

*Beyond the Steppe Frontier: A History of the Sino-Russian Border*. By Sören Urbansky. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2020. 392 pp. ISBN: 9780691181684 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/S0021911820004040

If frontiers could have life stories of their own and historians could write their biographies, Nianshen Song's *Making Borders in Modern East Asia: The Tumen River Demarcation, 1881–1919* and Sören Urbansky's *Beyond the Steppe Frontier: A History of the Sino-Russian Border* would be part of this genre. Both books examine the history of the formation of national borders in two river basins at the intersection of three states in Northeast Asia, raising questions about the significance of border regions in the making of modern nation-states. They both decenter conventional narratives by bringing out the voices of farmers, herders, intellectuals, activists, and officials living in border areas, with a focus on interactions between different groups. However, the approaches they take in terms of source bases and analytical frameworks are notably different.

Song's book focuses on the Tumen River region located in the southeastern part of modern-day Jilin Province in China, historically at the intersection of Korea, China, colonial Japan, and Russia. Combining Qing and Chosŏn institutional histories; officials' writings; unpublished archives held at Japanese, Korean, and Japanese institutions; and published provincial archival collections, maps, and other primary sources, Song demonstrates how nationalist narratives in Korea, Japan, and China were mutually constituted at the intersection of expansive empires and states, where local communities interacted and ideas collided. These frontier interactions were tied to international politics, group identities, and the formation of national myths rooted in the Tumen River region. The Korean communities that settled in the Tumen River region were central actors in the conceptualization of the border, as they were successively a source of political disputes between the Qing and Chosŏn, acted both as pawns and resistors

to Japanese imperial policies, and constituted important agents in the competition for state building.

In chapter 1, Song situates Qing-Chosŏn disputes over Korean settlements and boundary demarcation within larger multilateral diplomatic negotiations. In the 1880s, while the Qing moved to register Korean squatters as Qing subjects as part of an "empire-wide enterprise of borderland integration" (p. 37), the Korean king insisted on strictly forbidding Korean subjects from settling north of the Tumen River. Local Koreans leveraged discrepancies in the transcription of the Manchu/Mongol term *Tumen* (Chinese: 土門; Korean: 豆滿), arguing that, in fact, there were two rivers, one called T'omun (土門) and the other Tuman (豆滿), and that the real boundary was the Tuman (豆滿), while the T'omun (土門) was a domestic Korean river. This debate sparked a series of territorial disputes and rounds of boundary demarcation, in which Qing and Chosŏn officials used a "hybrid" (p. 49) system incorporating Western-style diplomacy and *zongfan* rhetoric backed up by state-led production of geographical knowledge and maps.

Chapter 2 examines the Qing-Chosŏn boundary demarcation of 1885–87 led by the officials Yi Chung-ha and Wu Dacheng, which ultimately failed to reach a final agreement. Song's close reading of documents and maps related to this mission reinforces the idea that power structures intersected with the production of geographical knowledge, as different visions of frontiers and boundaries coexisted and influenced one another in the context of a flexible international relations framework.

Chapter 3 focuses on local society, covering issues of landownership, registration, mobility, trade, and bandits. Evocative stories and statistics depict how local populations shaped this frontier region. The example of banditry illustrates how local dynamics related to larger national issues. Armed rebel groups provided upward mobility, as some of their members were recruited into state armies, while others formed resistant militias.

In chapter 4, Song documents what he calls the "interiorization" (p. 129) of the Manchurian frontier, which was characterized by Qing attempts to implement administrative reforms aimed at expanding state capacity in response to the larger context of competition for state building among Russia, Korea, and Japan in early twentieth-century Manchuria. Those reforms entailed the creation of a civil administration departing from the banner system, the increase of troops, the regulation of settlers, and attempts to assimilate Koreans by making them adopt the Qing hairstyle. Japan also engaged in state building on the northern bank of the Tumen River as it sought to prevent the area from becoming a "hotbed for anti-Japanese activism" (p. 159). Song shows how the Japanese official Shinoda Jisaku manipulated international norms to legitimize the Japanese colonial enterprise in the Kantō 間島 region (the area north of the Tumen River, Chinese: Jiandao; Japanese: Kantō). For example, he sought to represent Kantō as a no-man's land or *terra nullis* (p. 159), relying on Qing Jesuit works from Jean-Baptiste Regis and Jean-Baptiste Du Halde published in 1735. Similar to the tactics employed by European colonizers in Africa, Australia, and North America, Japan invoked the *terra nullis* principle to justify imperial expansion and occupation.

The penultimate chapter moves to an intellectual history of the border focusing on the formation of nationalist ideologies. Early twentieth-century Manchuria became a space encapsulating "all important political imaginations in early twentieth-century East Asia" (p. 173). Drawing on writings from Japanese, Korean, and Chinese intellectuals such as Naitō Konan, Song Jiaoren, and Sin Ch'ae-ho, Song shows that while their views of the Tumen border region diverged, their narratives were mutually constituted

and borrowed from each other. For example, Sin Ch'ae-ho's framework borrowed from the historical approach of the Chinese reformer Liang Qichao and the sinologist Naitō Konan's carefully studied Chinese views, including Song Jiaoren's *Jiandao Issue*.

In the final chapter, Song examines the formation of ethnic identity among Koreans living in the Yanbian region. Focusing on the issue of citizenship laws and naturalization, Song shows how multiple views of what it meant to be Korean were contested among Yanbian Koreans along the lines of reformism vs conservatism. Such debates alimented Korean nationalist movements that developed within educational institutions in Yanbian/Kantō. Song suggests that the March First Movement (1919), a turning point in the formation of Korean nationalism, was rooted in resistance movements in Yanbian (p. 251).

Attempting to use a similar regional focus that moves the reader away from imperial centers, Urbansky looks at the Argun River basin as a regional unit, which stretches from the intersection of Mongolia-China-Russia border triangle on the western edge, to the Hailar River on the southern edge, to the Cossack village of Olochi in the north. Adopting a *longue durée* approach contrasting with Song's narrow time frame, Urbansky's sweeping narrative spans the seventeenth century to the 1990s and focuses on cross-frontier encounters, migration, trade, and diplomatic exchanges. Using a quasi-encyclopedic approach that draws on a large number of mostly Russian-language sources including governmental archives, travel accounts, newspapers, propaganda images, and ethnographic surveys, the book uncovers numerous stories that paint a picture of how life at the frontier changed with shifts in political regimes. For Urbansky, the frontier changed from an abstract entity defined by treaties (Nerchinsk, 1689 and Khiakta, 1727), to a porous state border crossed by smugglers and herders (1911–1920s), to a heavily militarized barbed-wire fence that eliminated most possibilities for the movement of human and commodities (1930s–1950s), and finally to a place of renewed trade and encounters in the 1980s.

The main contribution of the book lies in the fourth and fifth chapters, where Urbansky depicts the 1929 Sino-soviet conflict as a watershed moment in the transformation of the frontier from a site of exchange and encounters to a strictly controlled and heavily militarized zone. In chapter 4, the reader learns about large-scale migrations of Buryat herders who crossed the Argun River to flee collectivization and taxation in the Soviet Union and settled in Hulunbuir in the 1920s. Chapter 5 argues that such border-crossing along with large-scale smuggling became nearly impossible in the 1930s, as the "open steppe" came "under lock and key" (p. 150). Calling the transformation process of the border one in which "the nation-state concept of a boundary emerged triumphant" (p. 217), Urbansky's work mixes a teleological narrative centered around "a general evolution towards territorial boundaries" (p. 14) with an implied hierarchy of ethnic groups in which indigenous populations are represented as "borderless" (pp. 8, 38), relying on an "archaic economy" (p. 70), "noble savages" (p. 98) successfully tamed by Moscow (p. 143), seeing their ambitions "absorbed into the objectives of" (p. 137) larger empires, or "neutralized by the metropoles" (p. 180). Urbansky promises to offer a bottom-up perspective centered on the frontier; yet, by excluding sources produced in languages other than Russian—existing Chinese archival collections on this region are only cursorily mentioned—this work amplifies the perception of a frontier shaped by great power politics while overlooking the diversity of voices and perspectives.

In terms of audience, Song's book has much to teach to scholars of modern Chinese, Japanese, and Korean history, as well as researchers interested in the formation of state borders at the turn of the century. Graduate seminars would be greatly enriched by Song's book to reflect on topics such as historical methods in the field of frontier

studies, critical use of multilingual sources, and deconstruction of nation-centered paradigms. Selections could also be assigned to undergraduate students in survey courses on East Asian history. Urbansky's book could satisfy the curiosity of readers interested in accounts on the Sino-Russian border from a Russian perspective.

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## Manchukuo Revisited: Transnational Culture and Radical Politics

*Manchukuo Perspectives: Transnational Approaches to Literary Production*. Edited by Annika A. Culver and Norman Smith. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2020. xii, 315 pp. ISBN: 9789888528134 (cloth).

*Fascism in Manchuria: The Soviet-China Encounter in the 1930s*. By Susanne Hohler. London: I.B. Tauris, 2017. ix, 262 pp. ISBN: 9781784535223 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/S0021911820004052

The study of Japan's client state Manchukuo 満洲国 (1932–45) by historians of modern China, Japan, Korea, Russia, and broadly defined Northeast Asia is a fast-growing field. Yet writing a comprehensive history of Manchukuo remains a challenging enterprise, as during its fourteen-year history, this colonial "state" did not maintain fixed borders, its multicultural population was on the move, and its highly militarized government and ideology were in stark contrast with the daily lives of urban and rural communities. Competing nationalist narratives and interpretations of Manchukuo's history in China, Japan, and the Soviet Union during World War II persisted under new political regimes during and after the Cold War. Recently, social and cultural historians have turned their attention to the experiences of the Manchu, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Russian diasporas, while other historians have focused on elusive notions of modernity, defined by urban growth, economic development, and technological and scientific transformation, while downplaying the horrific crimes conducted by the Japanese military against the local, predominantly Chinese, population. The two books reviewed here focus on media, literary productions, and transnational experiences, opening new venues for the study of Manchukuo's history.

*Manchukuo Perspectives: Transnational Approaches to Literary Production*, edited by Annika A. Culver and Norman Smith, brings together eighteen multinational contributors—Chen Shi, Chen Yan, Jiang Lei, Li Zhenglong, Liu Chao, Liu Xiaoli, Wang Yue, Ying Xiong, Zhan Li, and Zhang Quan from the People's Republic of China; Ōkubo Akio and Wanatabe Naoki from Japan; Kim Jaeyong from South Korea; Olga Bakich and Norman Smith from Canada; and Junko Agnew, Stephen Poland, and Karen Thornber from the United States—from such fields as literature, history, cultural studies, and film. They analyze the personal lives and cultural impact of the Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Russian intellectuals who lived in Manchukuo and pursued careers in literature, translation, and publishing despite ideological and regulatory obstacles imposed by authorities.

This volume's multidisciplinary and sociological approach to the study of Manchukuo's literary scene is inspired by French historian Gisele Sapiro's analysis of the challenges faced by writers in German-occupied Vichy France (1940–45).[1] During China's War of Resistance against Japan (1937–45), Manchukuo's government put new restrictions on local writers and publishers, including the policy of *Ba bu* 八不 (Eight Abstentions), which banned negative depictions of the regime and its ideals. Despite these pressures, as the individual chapters demonstrate, Manchukuo's multinational writers often ignored or violated these regulations by using creative techniques to produce a bleak picture of daily life there.

The eighteen chapters of this book are divided into three parts. Part one, "Manchukuo's Print Media and the Politics of Representation/Translation," looks at contrasting depictions of Manchukuo by various media outlets. While the official Manchukuo State Council's Chinese-language newspaper *Datong bao* 大同报 (Great Unity Herald), published from 1932 to 1945 in Xinjing 新京 (Changchun), disseminated official propaganda and optimism about New Manchuria's bright future (p. 19), its literary supplements, *Datong Julebu* 大同俱乐部(Great Unity Club) and *Manzhou Xinwentan* 满洲新文坛 (New Literary World in Manchuria), published resistance literature, for which many contributing editors and writers were persecuted (p. 46).

Part two, "Chinese Writers in Manchukuo and 'Manchukuo' Writers in Japan," presents a complex picture of "border-crossing" Chinese writers, who were not a homogenous group. Some of them were inspired by the May Fourth literary movement in China in the 1920s, while others borrowed from European and Japanese literary traditions. Chinese writer Shan Ding 山丁(1914–95) reflected exclusively on the landscape and social conditions of Manchukuo. Chinese writers Gu Ding 古丁 (1909–64) and Mei Niang 梅娘 (1916–2013) were bilingual, contributing to Chinese and Japanese publications and cross-cultural dialogue. Gu Ding created a hybrid Chinese language by using the elements of the Japanese language to "capture Manchukuo society as broadly as possible, and appeal to readers from various social strata" (p. 100). Mei Niang gained prominence as a writer by giving voice to women in the highly patriarchal society of Manchukuo, exposing social inequality and ethnic hierarchies within the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere (Daitōa Kyōeiken 大東亜共栄圏) (p. 193). Living in Xinjing, Osaka, and Beijing, translating from Japanese and writing in Chinese, gave her a unique perspective on the colonial nature of the Manchukuo regime.

The careers of Chinese and "Manchukuo" writers and their literary productions are discussed in chapters 5–13, explaining the evolution of Chinese literature in Manchukuo. From 1932 to 1937, these writers formed different literary associations and competed with each other, while during wartime, control and censorship over Chinese-language publications intensified, and they had to operate within the framework of Japanese-controlled "national" organizations and literary events such as the Greater East Asia Writers' Congress (Daitōa Bungakusha Taikai 大東亜文学者大会).

Part three, "Russian, Japanese, and Korean Writers in Manchukuo," discusses the challenges faced by Russian émigré poets, who did not fit into the official pan-Asian motto "harmony of the five ethnicities" (五族协和); Japanese writers, some of whom shared a double burden of being colonizers and left-wing critics of the colonial regime in Manchukuo; and Korean writers, whose status as Japan's colonial subjects in Korea

[1]Gisele Sapiro, *La Guerre des Écrivains, 1940–1953* [The war of the writers, 1940–1953] (Paris: Fayard, 1999).

changed when they moved to Manchukuo, causing their conflicting attitudes toward the Japanese Empire, Manchukuo, and Chinese society.

Chapters 14–18 demonstrate that the variety of personal experiences and writings in multiple languages complicate the narrative of resistance-versus-collaboration in Manchukuo's cultural productions. Several authors in this groundbreaking volume argue that the literature of Manchukuo, marginalized for ideological reasons in postwar China and the Koreas, should be further studied and recognized for its contribution to modern Chinese and East Asian literary history. This volume, with original translations, comprehensive textual analysis, multisource research, and detailed social scrutiny recreate a colorful and vivid historical panorama of literary life in Manchukuo. It will be a standard reference book about Manchukuo's culture for years to come.

Susanne Hohler's *Fascism in Manchuria: The Soviet-China Encounter in the 1930s* analyzes the evolution of Russian fascists in Harbin, from their beginnings in the Law Faculty in 1925 and the establishment of their party (Rossiiskaia fashistskaia partiia) in 1931, to the peak of their activities in 1937 and subsequent fragmentation and decline.[2] This is the second major study of the Russian fascists in English, after John Stephan's comprehensive study published more than four decades ago.[3] Hohler's study focuses on ideology, propaganda, and the social impact of Russian fascists on the Russian émigré society, organizations and youth in Harbin, only briefly mentioning the ties between Russian, Japanese, and Chinese militant political organizations, Manchukuo government and society.

In *Fascism in Manchuria*, Hohler argues that the Russian Fascist Party had a substantial influence on Harbin's Russian émigré society by engaging in aggressive propaganda and by infiltrating émigré organizations, societies, clubs, cultural and sports associations, the Orthodox Church, and education (p. 4). She employs the concept of "civil society" used by American political scientist Robert D. Putnam in his analysis of broken American society and the strategy to make it more democratic through acquiring social capital and building social networks.[4] Focusing "on the functions rather than narrowing the conceptual scope with a normatively charged definition" of civil society (p. 6), Hohler argues that there is a dark side to civil society and that the norms and values that people learn within a civil society organization can become racist and xenophobic and not democratic or universal (p. 7). Russian fascists exploited numerous civil society organizations in Harbin to their advantage by propagating their ideas, values and anti-Jewish sentiments.

*Fascism in Manchuria* is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the historical development of the Russian community in Harbin, which lost its privileges with the collapse of imperial Russia in 1917 but continued to grow until mid-1930s, receiving new émigrés and refugees from the Soviet Union. Japan's occupation of Manchuria in 1931 immediately affected the lives of Russian émigrés, contrary to the Hohler's statement that in the early 1930s, "Russian community structure and civil society remained mostly intact, apart from a few exceptions" (p. 36).

Chapter 2 discusses the evolution and ideology of the Russian Fascist Party in Harbin. Hohler distinguishes Russian fascism in Manchuria from the German and

[2]In 1934, the Russian Fascist Party was renamed the All-Russian Fascist Party.

[3]John Stephan, *The Russian Fascists: Tragedy and Farce in Exile, 1925–1945* (Harper & Row, 1978).

[4]Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).

Italian brands, in that it combined European fascist theory with imperial Russia's glorious past and anticommunist/anti-Soviet rhetoric. This "exile and diaspora fascism" was based on ultranationalism and "the idea of mystical rebirth of the Russian nation through fascism" (pp. 60–61). Russian fascists saw themselves as part of global fascist movement, but there is little discussion in the book as to their ties to other fascist organizations. The Japanese officials in Manchukuo supported Russian fascists only as long as they were useful (p. 64).

Chapters 3 and 4 analyze how the Russian Fascist Party used education and youth organizations to indoctrinate the émigré youth. To reach out to the adults, the Russian fascists took over the Russian Club, Harbin's major cultural center, turning it into a platform for attacking old leaders of the émigré community and "Judeo-Masonic conspiracy." (p. 109). Chapter 5 further discusses anti-Jewish agitation and propaganda from 1933 until 1937, when it reached its peak. Several leaders of Harbin's Jewish community left Harbin when the political situation in the city became intolerable.

This book raises further questions: Can stateless Russian émigré organizations and associations in Harbin after 1934 be considered "civil society," when the Japanese military mission exercised control over Harbin's society? What were the links between the Russian and Jewish members of Harbin's "civil society" and their communities in Tianjin and Shanghai? What were the attitudes of the Russian émigré, Chinese, and Japanese communities in Harbin and Manchuria toward each other? While this book does not provide clear answers to these questions, it effectively portrays controversial political campaigns, associations, debates, and personalities of Harbin's Russian-speaking community. This book will appeal to those interested in the history of Manchukuo, fascism, Russian and Jewish diasporas, and transnationalism.

The two books discussed here offer new perspectives on Manchukuo culture, society, and politics. They use a variety of historical periodicals and publications in multiple languages, now scattered in private collections, libraries, and archives around the world. The full picture of Manchukuo's culture and society will be incomplete without further interdisciplinary research and international scholarly dialogue.

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*American Exodus: Second-Generation Chinese Americans in China, 1901–1949*. By Charlotte Brooks. Oakland: University of California Press, 2019. xviii, 309 pp. ISBN: 9780520302686 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/S0021911820004064

Charlotte Brooks's *American Exodus* provides a captivating account of the immigration of Chinese Americans from the United States to China. Within migration studies, there has been a long-standing effort to diversify the field with studies that pay increased attention to transnational movements of students, funds, and personal or familial networks. Immigration from the United States to China, along with return migration, is an understudied phenomenon. This book makes great strides to remedy that.

Brooks identifies two types of Chinese American immigrants. The first consisted of the sons and daughters of Chinese immigrants who returned to Guangdong Province or

Hong Kong through family and merchant networks to study or work. The second included Chinese Americans who studied at US universities and then sought the kinds of vocational opportunities in China that were closed to them by American racism. Because in many cases they dreamed of using their knowledge to aid in China's development, Brooks terms this population the "modernizers." The line between these two types of migrants proved most stark before the 1920s, though Brooks argues that they "never fully lost their meaning" (p. 9).

Brooks follows these migrants in five roughly chronological chapters beginning at the turn of the twentieth century and concluding at the end of World War II. Throughout these decades, the merchants/students and modernizers grappled with thorny questions about what it meant to be a citizen. Both China and the United States maintained a rhetoric of acceptance and belonging that did not match the lived experience of these immigrants. The United States after *Wong Kim Ark* acknowledged US citizens by virtue of place of birth, but the reality was that the full benefits of citizenship were conferred only on those who were also white. When Chinese Americans traveled to China, American consular officials invoked their dual citizenship to dismiss them, even going so far as to invent their own interpretations of nationality law to determine at what point Chinese Americans might be considered to have lost their US citizenship (p. 94). In both legal disputes in the late Qing era and in existential crises such as the Japanese invasions of the 1930s, US representatives in China abandoned Chinese Americans or provided only limited support.

Meanwhile, Brooks demonstrates that the rise of the Republican era and Sun Yat-sen's infamous laudatory tributes to the support of the overseas Chinese did not prevent the Guomindang-led government from treating many Chinese American immigrants as suspect. With their Western ideals and limited facility in Chinese, Brooks explains, new arrivals from the United States often sought refuge in foreign enclaves and colonized spaces in Shanghai and Hong King, where they could carve out a livelihood that did not require them to support political goals or tactics of the Guomindang.

Chinese American immigrants to China have been largely overlooked in histories of the migrations and diplomatic relationships between the two countries they bridge. *American Exodus* is a welcome remedy to this problem, making impressive use of the archival records generated by the intricacies of Exclusion Era immigration paperwork, available newspapers, and the records of private institutions and businesses to overcome the challenges of archival access in the present-day People's Republic of China. In this, Brooks weaves a thoughtful and deeply engaging narrative that brings to light a population that we have long known existed in a vague sense but had no systematic understanding of to consult. In the process, she ably bridges the migration and diplomatic histories of China and the United States, offering new insights about how constructions of citizenship and activist immigrants contribute to each. With its frequent use of colorful individual life stories, photographs, and lively, jargon-free language, this book will appeal to undergraduates as well as seasoned scholars of immigration history, overseas Chinese, and Sino-American relations.

In the course of her fascinating narrative, Brooks notes that Chinese migrants with citizenship in other Anglophone countries faced a similar "in-between" status, but she does not delve far into the extent to which overseas Chinese from Southeast Asia did as well. To what extent were Chinese Americans inherently set apart from the rest of the Chinese diaspora? Brooks makes passing reference to these comparisons on several occasions in the book, and a more complete comparison is far beyond the scope of her project. But it appears to be a fruitful avenue for future inquiry. Overseas

Chinese and Chinese American histories have not often spoken directly to one another, but *American Exodus* suggests there might be more room to do so, at least with respect to returning migrants in China in the first half of the twentieth century.

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*Remapping the Sinophone: The Cultural Production of Chinese-Language Cinema in Singapore and Malaya before and during the Cold War*. By Wai-Siam Hee. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2019. 242 pp. ISBN: 9789888528035 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/S0021911820004076

This monograph makes a significant contribution to Sinophone studies through its investigation of the relationships among Sinitic-language cultural production, historical experiences of overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia, and the imaginary homeland (China proper). *Remapping the Sinophone* complicates Shu-mei Shih's definition of Sinophone by examining the depictions of "Chineseness" in Malayan and Singaporean films made before and during the Cold War period. It not only addresses the omission of film in the scholarship on Southeast Asian Sinophone cultural production, which has primarily focused on literary texts after 1960, but also expands the scope of Sinophone cinema studies, which have been limited to works from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Anglophone regions outside Asia. Wai-Siam Hee contests the epistemology of the term "Sinophone," which is deployed to question Euro-American colonialism and neocolonialism, China-centrism, diaspora, and national identity.

Culling through declassified documents, archives, newspapers, tabloids, magazines, and other print media, Hee contends that heterogeneous "Chinese-language cinemas" had already appeared in Singapore and Malaya during the Cold War period. This book studies the way multilingual Chinese films were disseminated as a powerful form of cultural production, popular memory, and propaganda in Malaya and Singapore from 1926 to 1965. In the moving images, "Chineseness," "Chinese-language," and "Chinese identity" are represented as fluctuating concepts, reflecting filmmakers' negotiation with imperialist colonialism and ethnic nationalism.

In the introduction, Hee traces the development of Sinophone theory since the 1990s. Chen Peng-Hsiang's definition focuses on anticolonial and anti-imperialist resistance and the juxtaposition between Chineseness and Western modernity. Shu-mei Shih's Sinophone discourse deconstructs Chinese Han nationalism and the identity of Chinese people who are outside China. Wang Der-Wei's revision replaces Shih's postcolonialist framework with a "postloyalist" framework. Hee also invokes Wang Gung-wu's categorization of overseas Chinese into three groups during the Cold War, to analyze different degrees of nationalist identification with China in early Malayan and Singaporean Chinese-language films.

The book's first two chapters examine films that represent "Chineseness" as a cultural and historical affiliation for overseas Chinese people in Malaya and Singapore. The first chapter unpacks the linguistic and cultural creolization in *New Friend* (1927, directed by Guo Chaowen) and argues that it was the first locally produced film in Malaya. Reflecting

on the biography of the producer and co-screenwriter of *New Friend*, Liu Beijin, Hee observes that Liu's works and life ironically foreground the difference between the "Chinese-ness" he promotes and the "China-ness" represented by both the Kuomintang and the Communist parties. The second chapter rethinks the term "Mahua" (Malaysian Chinese) as it examines Wu Cun's three Chinese-language films made in 1940s Singapore. Emphasizing the "non-Chinese," "non-Malaysian" characteristics of the films, Hee scrutinizes the nationalist and colonialist discourses that erase the working class's anti-imperialist struggle and delves into the way the female characters undermine patriarchal and nationalist ideologies.

Chapters 3 and 4 focus on propagandist film production overseen by colonialist and imperialist institutions. Chapter 3 discusses the Malayan Film Unit (MFU), the organization affiliated with the British colonial government that produced anticommunist propagandist films in the 1950s and 1960s. Hee analyzes these films portraying the New Village as case studies. The fourth chapter examines Hollywood productions of anticommunist, multilingual Chinese films in Singapore, commissioned by the US State Department during the global "Campaign of Truth" in the 1950s. Whereas the MFU's production fostered Malayans' national identity by denigrating Malayan communists and conflating them with Han-chauvinist Chinese in Malaya, the anticommunist films made by the New York Sound Masters, Inc., established the trend for the censorship of Singaporean and Malaysian cinema after the Cold War.

Chapter 5 turns to Yi Shui, a Singaporean Chinese director who made "Malayanized Chinese-language cinema" that reflected a multilingual and hybridized Chinese culture and resisted the oppression from English- and Malay-speaking groups. Yi supported a multicultural nationalism that bolstered a self-governed Malaya. Hee analyzes Yi's two films, *Lion City* (1960) and *Black Gold* (1963), in the framework of Third World Cinema, a 1950s film movement that used realism to promote anticolonialism and anti-imperialism.

In the afterword, Hee points out the constant struggles of overseas Chinese filmmakers with the left/right political forces in their representation and interpellation of Chinese into the Malayan nationalist discourses. Hee argues that "the borders of the Sinophone were gradually and silently forming from the 1920s to the Cold War" (p. 176) in Singaporean and Malayan cinema, before it was marginalized and forgotten. In this sense, the Cold War Singaporean and Malayan cinema also "provides an early demonstration of the difficulty and complexity of the Sinophone" (p. 177).

In Hee's "cultural approach to tracing the theory of heterogeneous Chinese languages" (p. 2), two vexed, correlated issues in current Sinophone studies are addressed. First, Hee's research on Cold War Chinese cinema in Malaysia and Singapore illuminates the fact that present knowledge production of the Sinophone has been motivated and restrained by ideological underpinnings. Second, as Hee views the dichotomy of "'East/West' and 'diaspora/against-diaspora' discourses" (p. 178) in Sinophone studies as something left over from Cold War politics, the book cautions against the monolithic position of current Sinophone studies. Hee notes, "if this early anti-imperialist, anticolonial original memory and history is erased from the territory of the Sinophone, this is tantamount to erasing any possibility of the Sinophone taking part in local practice in Singapore and Malaysia (p. 178). Hee's research into the forgotten history of Southeast Asian cinema is a commendable and crucial intervention into the field of Sinophone studies. His research not only unsettles the notion of heteroglossia in multilingual Chinese cultural practices

compromised by political hegemonies. But it also foregrounds the perennial tension between Sinophone cultural production and theorization.

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*Opening the Gates to Asia: A Transpacific History of How America Repealed Asian Exclusion*. By Jane H. Hong. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019. xii, 264 pp. ISBN: 9781469653358 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/S0021911820004088

Asian exclusion connotes a uniformity of immigration regulation that conflates the piecemeal process by which limits on Asian migration actually emerged in white settler societies and some Central and South American nations.[1] As early as 1862, the US Congress began by banning the importation of "coolies," then prostitutes in 1875, before severely limiting legal entries by Chinese, defined by race to a few exempt classes in 1882. Japanese restriction resulted from a 1908 negotiated agreement whereby the Japanese government limited emigration by laborers. In 1917, Congress banned immigration from a "barred zone" that covered most of Middle, South, and Southeast Asia but not the Philippines, a US colony, or Japan and Korea. Not until the 1924 Immigration Act were all Asians, except for Filipinos, uniformly excluded as "aliens ineligible for citizenship." Even after Filipinos came under restriction with the 1934 Tydings-McDuffie Act, they received an annual entry quota of fifty.

The dismantling of "Asian exclusion" was similarly fragmented and influenced by foreign relations considerations, as described in Jane H. Hong's broadly researched and insightful monograph, *Opening the Gates to Asia*. Chinese, Indian, Filipino, and Japanese American community advocates campaigned largely separately for immigration and citizenship rights, and sometimes at cross-purposes with representatives from their homelands who prioritized gaining international status by receiving immigration rights matching those of the United States' most favored European allies. Asian American activists, in contrast, sought immigration reforms to substantively improve their lives in the United States—particularly immigration rights for women to unite or form families—while international lobbyists were content with symbolic gestures that barely changed conditions. Moreover, repeal bills had to be framed narrowly to pass through a Congress that remained committed to sharply limiting Asian immigration through the 1960s. When the Indian revolutionary and scholar Taraknath Das, with whom Hong begins her narrative, urged an end to *all* Asian exclusion laws, he seriously undermined the campaign for the repeal of only *Chinese* exclusion.

[1]See Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); David C. Atkinson, *The Burden of White Supremacy: Containing Asian Migration in the British Empire and the United States* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017); David FitzGerald and David Cook-Martin, *Culling the Masses: The Democratic Origins of Racist Immigration Policy in the Americas* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2014).

As the United States' chief World War II ally in Asia, China was positioned to be the first to leverage the repeal of Chinese exclusion but accepted terms that dismayed community activists such as Albert Lee, who had long campaigned for immigration of wives of noncitizen Chinese American men. The 1943 repeal brought a presidential acknowledgment of exclusion as a "historic mistake" and naturalization rights, but it allotted a token fifty entries per year, determined through the existing "national origins quota" system. This compromise set the pattern for future repeals in which the US government removed the stigma of outright exclusion that advanced its diplomatic agendas while still blocking Asian immigration almost entirely.

Independence campaigns characterized US negotiations with Indian and Filipino representatives. For the former, the United States first sought Britain's sanction to deal with its soon-to-be former colony, then laid the foundations for future diplomatic relations through conciliatory gestures anticipating India's eventual autonomy. For the latter, however, the United States already wielded significant influence and reneged on promises that Filipino soldiers would receive US military veterans status while conferring narrow immigration and citizenship rights. These two repeal movements operated separately yet became conjoined in the 1946 Luce-Celler Act. These are the two most transnational of Hong's chapters in drawing on archives of the Indian and Filipino independence movements.

Japanese Americans were the last to receive repeal, but they wielded the greatest influence in Washington, D.C., of any of these ethnic communities through the efforts of lobbyist Mike Masaoka. Masaoka spearheaded the rapid reintegration of Japanese Americans through the martial patriotism of the 442nd Infantry Regiment and civic compliance with incarceration. These displays of hyperpatriotism, combined with Masaoka's political access, gained Japanese Americans citizenship rights and an immigration quota of 185 in the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act. Masaoka acknowledged the token nature of these measures while prioritizing the symbolic acceptance that they conveyed for the former "enemy aliens." Not until 1965 would overt racial and national preferences in immigration laws end.

Hong presents the many complexities impeding enactment of immigration policy, including attempts and agendas that failed and the abortive character of laws that passed. Her comparative lens reveals the divided character of Asian American activism before the civil rights era and the considerable influence of long-distance nationalism over ethnic communities that have been for most of their histories predominantly foreign born. Because immigration laws are enacted by Congress in Washington, D.C., access to national leaders is necessary to influence policy. Local communities are handicapped while representatives of foreign governments have guaranteed access through the US Department of State. Not until Asian Americans held congressional or cabinet seats, positions more reliably attained after Hawaii gained statehood in 1959, could they more directly influence immigration laws to advance their own agendas.

A key flaw of this book is its lack of a chapter about Korean migration, even though the comparison is intriguing, with independence claimed in 1945 by activists such as Syngman Rhee, who spent decades campaigning in the United States, followed by the crisis of the Korean War. This monograph will nonetheless speak to scholars concerned with migration, international relations, and immigration policy studies.

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*Faithful Fighters: Identity and Power in the British Indian Army.* By Kate Imy. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2019. 328 pp. ISBN: 9781503610743 (paper).
doi:10.1017/S002191182000409X

In *Faithful Fighters*, Kate Imy undertakes a refreshing investigation into the Indian Army between the 1910s and 1930s to trace the roots and development of religious militarism and racial masculinity in the colonial military institution of British India. In doing so, she also provides a snapshot of the civilian communities from which the Indian Army recruited and that it protected. As Imy makes clear, the decision to examine the three-decade span covering World War I and the interwar period allows us to observe the Indian Army in war and peace, the ever-changing contexts of political demands from within, the collapse of a global economy, and the British Empire on the international stage.

Imy strategically posits this topic at the intersection of key scholarship as varied as World War I colonial soldiers (Das), the discourse of "martial race" (Streets), and colonial masculinity (Sinha), to name just a few. She also engages with specific works on individual religions (Sikhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity) and regions (Punjab and Nepal). A major contribution of the book is to draw on a wide range of scholarly debates, which she skillfully integrates into her own focused narrative. The result shows the reader a panoramic view of the army and its transformation over nearly thirty years.

While the book's cover, opening sentences of the introduction, and conclusion all point to Sikh soldiers' World War I engagement on the Western Front in Europe, Imy manages to tackle a much broader array of topics. In the first three chapters, she focuses on three major ethno-religious communities (Sikh, Muslim, and Hindu Gurkha) represented in the Indian Army and their positions around World War I. Discourse of "martial race" dictated who would be recruited into the Indian Army and how to discipline, train, and deploy each ethno-religious group in segregation. Yet South Asian soldiers "simultaneously internalized and challenged" (p. 11) these imposed identities for their own communal and political agenda. They also demanded secular benefits under the disguise of "religious complaints" of rituals and provisions.

Imy presents one compelling example of contradictions in practice. This concerns the Indian Army's food provision and how that met or denied the varied religious needs (chapter 4). The army was reluctant, for example, to cater to the Hindu "Brahmin diet" and saw it as "incompatible with military service due to [its] perceived stringency" (p. 126). Meanwhile, fasting for Ramzan and the feast of Eid were allowed to be observed, because they were accepted as "a legitimate form of community belonging that could solidify. . . military discipline and loyalty" (p. 139). Following this line, the military authority deemed the 1914 Muslim mutiny in Singapore a religious complaint over a forced premature end of the Ramzan that year. As a result, the army failed to understand the mutiny was instead a protest from the rank and file concerning inadequate food supply and distribution in anticipation of the war (p. 138).

While individual episodes like this are carefully presented and revealing, readers may ask what underlay all these institutional contradictions beyond any specific religion or specific ethnic group. What was—if at all—the colonial consistency, or a colonial "master plan" in thoughts and practice, for these seemingly inconsistent treatments that favored Islam over Hinduism in terms of food provision? Similarly, what explains contradictions within the same religion, such as in the case concerning Muslim Panthans' removal from the World War I front line, whereas Muslims from Punjab and other

regions were extensively deployed in the Middle Eastern theater? Alternatively, were these cases merely an incidental, chaotic consequence of an assortment of uncoordinated improvisation at local levels?

The increasing impact of the Indian Army's religious hierarchy and segregation on interwar India is a focus of the last two chapters. In these sections, Imy assesses the process and consequences of the "Indianization" reform that encouraged military and political participation of the South Asian population. The strict ethno-religious boundaries, being so diligently safeguarded by the army, were apparently abandoned in India's new military educational institutions, which invited applicants from all corners of the society. Yet their control over and emphasis on individual ethno-religions, according to Imy, were indeed enhanced via regulated places of worship on campus, and institutionalized rites of "parades" (pp. 173–80). Outside the army, the concept of "martial race" was deeply internalized by subject communities to form a principal criterion for anticolonial campaigns (or the lack of it, in the case of Hindu nationalists). As it had been so closely associated with the army and its practice, it inevitably embraced a military and violent outlook, and in some cases, a fascist ideology. As Imy points out, the rigid division based on religion and race spilt from the army to the entire society, and no doubt paved the way to the disastrous partition with extensive violence that took place soon after World War II.

*Faithful Fighters* gives us many vivid examples of regulating the body—for example, the close association between male bodies' physical prowess and *kirpan* (a Sikh sword), sexual intimacy between British and South Asian officers and soldiers, and a ritual to purify Hindu Nepalese soldiers who crossed the inauspicious *kala pani* (black water) during overseas campaigns. Each of these examples illustrates the struggle of myriad faiths in "family, community, nation and empire" (p. 10). One wishes Imy could have taken this further to explore a general ponderance over the intricated relation and strange interplay of the culture of body and faith, including, but not limited to, religion.

Overall, *Faithful Fighters* is an engaging and informative read that includes an impressive number of sources to paint a mosaic of the Indian Army in the first decades of the twentieth century. Moreover, this work helps explain the social divisions and mass violence that followed in the second half of the century in India's military and civilian spheres. Students of modern India and British Empire at all levels, with a wide range of interests in military formation, religious conflict, body politics, nationalist demand, and colonial reform will all find inspiration here.

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*On the Brink: Trump, Kim, and the Threat of Nuclear War*. By Van Jackson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. 236 pp. (cloth) ISBN: 9781108473484.
doi:10.1017/S0021911820004106

Van Jackson, a former Pentagon insider and a Korean security expert currently teaching at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand, has succeeded in writing a highly accessible book that traces the roots of the often-hostile relationship between the United

States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) that nearly led to nuclear war in 2017. Jackson's investigation of North Korea's strategic culture is especially illuminating, as it highlights the "I die, you die" approach of the Kim family regime. As Jackson explains, the standoff between Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un was a long time in coming, and a Hillary Clinton presidency likely would have encountered similar circumstances in Northeast Asia.

As US policymakers struggle to understand North Korea's rhetoric and actions, Jackson's explanation of Pyongyang's strategic culture offers valuable insights. For example, he highlights the "theory of victory" that undergirds North Korea's behavior abroad. North Korea's resolve to show strength, rather than weakness, makes Northeast Asia a particularly volatile space for US intervention. In addition, as Jackson explains, North Korea's historical legacy of "anti-Great Power-ism" under the rubric of its *juche* ideology still influences how the Kim family regime interacts with larger powers on the world stage. Jackson states, "And to North Koreans, survival required risk-taking; superior resolve could compensate for inferior size. North Korea's nuclear obsession was not 'caused' by *juche* strategic culture, but the latter enabled the former" (p. 24). As a historian of international relations myself, I found Jackson's use of historical context and emphasis on North Korea's ideological traditions particularly enlightening and perceptive.

Jackson offers a play-by-play analysis of Trump's nuclear standoff with the Kim family regime. From analyzing the US president's mystifying (dare I say, idiotic) tweets to examining the impact of Otto Warmbier's tragic death, Jackson's book is one of the most readable and intellectual examinations of contemporary US-DPRK relations. One of the general themes that Jackson evokes in his writing is the sheer lack of restraint from the Trump administration. The White House's ratcheting up of sanctions, military exercises, and fiery rhetoric did little to help ease the situation on the Korean peninsula but instead fanned the flames of nuclear brinkmanship.

As Jackson makes explicit, the Trump administration's bellicose rhetoric and actions nearly started a second Korean War. Jackson gives South Korean president Moon Jae-in due credit in alleviating tensions on the Korean peninsula. Moon's rapprochement with Kim Jong Un resulted in a unified Korea women's hockey team at the Winter Olympics and a successful PyeongChang Olympic Games. Kim Jong Un's strategic decision in 2018 to move away from a policy of nuclear development to economic growth was also heralded by Jackson as an important step in deescalating the nuclear crisis with the United States.

Jackson aptly argues that the US "maximum pressure" policy toward North Korea's nuclear arsenal is too rigid and comprehensive. As a regime with a paranoid fear of a US invasion and a siege mentality, the North Korean government will never surrender its nuclear weapons. As the US government maintains an inflexible policy of compete denuclearization, Jackson argues that working-level diplomatic talks, a nuclear arms reduction rather than total dismantlement of the DPRK's nuclear program, and a gradual rollback of US sanctions would yield a more peaceful and friendly US-DPRK relationship. Primarily because of the Kim family regime's horrendous record of human rights violations, I am a bit of a hawk on North Korea–related issues. However, I, too, believe that all-out international sanctions have exceeded their lifespan in curbing North Korea's nuclear development and subversive behavior abroad. Unfortunately, Trump is far too impatient and selfish to pursue such a delicate process of diplomatic normalization with Pyongyang. He prefers the superficial photo ops of flashy summits with Kim Jong Un in luxury hotels in Southeast Asia.

One of my minor criticisms is that Jackson does not go far enough in examining North Korea's official rhetoric. English-language statements from North Korea's state-run media and quotes from DPRK Foreign Ministry officials to Western journalists are highly sanitized for foreign consumption by Pyongyang's propaganda apparatus. The Kim family regime's internal messaging to its own people would have been an interesting perspective to look at. An in-depth investigation of North Korea's internal Korean-language publications, such as the party organ *Rodong Sinmun* and cultural magazines such as *Chollima*, may have yielded additional insights into the Kim family regime's mindset during the nuclear standoff. Most, if not all, of Jackson's sources come from English-language materials. In addition, the constant sectioning in the chapters made the reading jarring at times.

However, these are minor quibbles and Jackson should be commended for his excellent book. I highly recommend this book to international relations scholars, Korea specialists, and especially those in Beltway policy circles.

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*Tales of Southeast Asia's Jazz Age: Filipinos, Indonesians and Popular Culture, 1920–1936*. By Peter Keppy. Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2019. xiii, 269 pp. ISBN: 9789813250512 (paper).
doi:10.1017/S0021911820004118

Peter Keppy fills an important gap in Anglophone Asian popular music scholarship by investigating the musicians who created hybrid modernist—and, importantly for Keppy, middle-brow—popular music forms in the Philippines and Indonesia during the early twentieth century. Keppy surveys critical journalism in both locations, arguing that the role of interested audiences, or fans, helped shape these newly emergent forms in a mediated form of collaboration with popular artists of the day. Theoretically, he rallies pop cosmopolitanism and participatory pop as theorized by Henry Jenkins, as well as Joel Kahn's idea of popular modernism, to argue for the importance of these "non-elites in actively shaping and engaging in cosmopolitanism and modernity without associations of high culture and elite manipulation" (p. 7).

Keppy first explores the deep relationship between Luis Borromeo, a Filipino from an elite family who was formally trained in classical music, and an audience of middle- and upper-class fans who began shaping a middle-brow popular culture that borrowed from older Spanish entertainments as well as newer American styles. Borromeo is placed within a richly drawn historical context in which official culture, as represented by the University of the Philippines's Conservatory of Music, which privileged the European concert tradition, was simultaneously undermined by music professors' interests in popular music and dance, allowing both ends of the cultural spectrum to mingle in concert as well as dance halls. Drawing from newspaper articles, advertisements, and concert programs, Keppy is alert to the tensions inherent to such high-low mixings as well as the impact of commercial culture on the discursive and performative facets of Filipino popular music culture at the time.

As Keppy expertly delineates, Filipino nationalism and conceptions of modernity shaped this dance between Borromeo and the cultural guardians of high culture and their allies in the government who sought to more sharply demarcate the very lines that Borromeo and the popular audiences he attracted were blurring between legitimate culture and the music and dance bubbling up from the demimonde world of the dance hall. However, it is the impact of media—phonograph recordings, sound films, song sheet publications, and radio, not to mention the newspapers and journals Keppy productively engages throughout the book—that helped institutionalize and normalize the hybrid popular music styles that shaped mass popular audiences while creating an "'in-between' culture that remained awkwardly situated between high art and vulgar entertainment" (p. 2).

In the second part of the book, Keppy illuminates the career of another forgotten star, the Indonesian singer and dancer Miss Riboet. Unlike Borromeo, Riboet came from humble beginnings, using her work in the vernacular Javanese theater genre dubbed "Malay opera" as a way to claim social authority. In her rise to popular celebrity, Riboet transformed older Malaysian opera forms through her use of topical songs, advocating the virtues of respectability that mirrored the aspirations of Malay opera aficionados in seeking legitimacy and cultural parity with European opera and other cultural idioms. Formed by the merging of earlier forms of vernacular theater, Komedie Stamboel and *bangsawan*, in "European eyes, Malay opera represented diluted Euro-American plays and songs" (p. 144). Early ethnomusicologist Jaap Kunst, for example, viewed developments such as Malay opera with some derision due to his shared interest with other elites in preserving cultural forms deemed premodern and unsullied by foreign elements (pp. 140–41). Kunst, like many other elites, particularly during this time of social upheaval in Indonesia, "found it difficult to accept that cultural transformations had occurred in Indonesia (for centuries, in fact), and assumed that indigenous musical traditions were under threat due to 'the hybridizing influence of alien music influences'" and remained "averse to theater or music as vehicles for social or political critique" (p. 141). Riboet challenged both ideas by helping to create a contemporary form of Malay opera unmoored from the earlier vernacular traditions such as Stamboel theater while simultaneously producing pointed social critique in her music.

Keppy does an admirable job of detailing the successes as well as the tribulations of both Borromeo and Riboet in their respective arenas of endeavor. While at first glance their efforts seem somewhat distant from each other and their coupling idiosyncratic, Keppy manages to build a bridge between these two case studies by (re)presenting the two artists "as cultural brokers, opening up a popular modernity and popular cosmopolitanism for the working to middle classes. *It did not produce an avant garde cosmopolitan art for elites*" (p. 238; emphasis added). Significantly, Borromeo and Riboet serve as early examples of expressive cultural workers as important mediators of the ways in which Asian nations and populations managed the often contradictory, if not conflictual, demands of the local and the global. Their middle-brow hybrid cultural forms parallel a number of other better-known cultural forms that were shaped by similar jostlings between tradition and modernity in Japan, India, and China, and in this sense, Keppy is to be commended for showcasing artists relatively unknown to Anglophone scholarship.

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*Postcolonial Grief: The Afterlives of the Pacific Wars in the Americas*. By Jinah Kim. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2019. ix, 185 pp. ISBN: 9781478002932 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/S002191182000412X

To silence the mourning of dead victims is to legitimize the violence against them. In *Postcolonial Grief*, Jinah Kim refuses such a closure of the settler colonial Pacific Arena order by revealing the "missing Asian bodies" as spectral beings of insurrection. The existing framework for dealing with the victims of Japanese and American militarism in the Pacific Arena has focused on seeking closure and reconciliation. Kim pungently criticizes this neoliberal framework for co-opting biopolitical narratives of healing that legitimize state violence and for muffling the dissenting narratives of colonialism. Drawing on theories of Fanonian anticolonial psychoanalysis and neoliberal biopolitics, Kim offers a comparative analysis of grief and mourning practices as a resistance to imperial reconciliation, drawing from examples including Los Angeles, Japan, Peru, and South Korea. This book is well suited for scholars and students in Asian American and postcolonial studies, as well as readers who are interested in the themes and theories of mourning and melancholia in general.

Kim's interdisciplinary and transnational investigation of the abject subjects in literary and filmic representations provides remarkable insights into discussions of melancholia and state violence. For instance, in chapter 1, through a reading of Frantz Fanon's "Colonial Wars and Mental Disorder" from *Wretched of the Earth* and Hisaye Yamamoto's "A Fire in Fontana," Kim demonstrates how melancholia has been pathologized among Algerians by the French colonial state and how postcolonial grief is co-opted by the state as racialized injury in the US neoliberal context. Kim deftly connects the racialized injury of Japanese American internment to Black dispossession during Jim Crow, "[linking] the histories of loss and of racism" (p. 39) to challenge a resolved, settled past through the practice of grievance.

This linkage dovetails with Kim's reading of the Los Angeles Riots of 1992 in chapter 2, in which she connects Asian American and Black struggles in a postcolonial ordering. Instead of understanding the riots as simply racial conflict, Kim harshly criticizes the government interregnum during the LA Riots, by interrogating US militarism and articulating the ways that white supremacy justified the racial construction of Others and pitted them against each other. As Kim notes, "immigrants . . . were forced to fratricide" (p. 62). Kim captures the confluence of military violence and white supremacy over Guatemalan and South Korean immigrants in this context through her analysis of two literary works. The setting of *Sa-I-Gu*—state absence during the LA Riots—enables the protagonist's revenge killing within the chaos in *The Tattooed Soldier*.

The third and fourth chapters examine the postcolonial afterlives "as abject ghosts and conjured spirits," providing perhaps the most interesting analysis of the book. Japanese colonization and US geopolitical dominance over the Korean peninsula has resulted in a lingering *han* (grief and resentment) among Koreans; however, such violence "is sought to be covered over by a narrative of American heroism and interracial fraternity" (p. 78). To prevent victims' stories from being covered and closed, Kim gives shape to the analytic "transpacific noir" to draw our attention to "the margins, border zones, and minor subject" (p. 71), calling for an acknowledgment of American empire—and so a refusal to forget the past trauma. The most intriguing analysis of "afterlives" leads to Kim's conceptualization of *bachi* (罰 divine punishment) in reading Naomi Hirahara's *Summer of the Big Bachi*. Kim argues for *bachi* as "an alternative juridical, ethical, and religious model to

think about the afterlives of the atomic bomb" (pp. 82–83). This insight provides new perspective to understand postcolonial afterlives by employing the concept of *bachi* not only to surpass the limits of existing moral and judicial system but also to problematize the current models for reconciliation.

Continuing the lines of her arguments about disrupting this closure of reconciliation through mourning the dead victims in chapter 4, Kim contributes a gendered reading of death and mourning through an investigation of Teresa Ralli and José Watanabe's *Antigona*. In this version of the well-known story of Antigone, Kim points out, Antigone is murdered by the state for refusing to stop mourning her dead brother. Kim interprets Antigone's later choice not to become a mother as being "equated to a life lived in death" (p. 107). Death is erased to be disappeared by state terrorism in liberal humanist frameworks. Drawing on Diana Taylor's concept of "percepticide" and "the disappeared" of Peru's civil war, Kim critiques a hypervisibility of state violence relative to the US knowledge production that blinds people and even forces "looking away" to become instinctive (p. 89). The book ends with Kim's figurative "watery graves," which refers to the bones risen from the seas between Japan and Korea as an unsettling force to protest against Barack Obama's historic visit to Hiroshima in 2016.

Kim gathers disparate material from Asian diasporic literature and culture into a coherent argument of how liberal nation-states silence past violence and police the speaking of loss. *Postcolonial Grief* covers new ground by providing a new understanding of the biopolitical regime of mourning in the Pacific and connects this biopolitics to theories of grief and melancholia. Kim problematizes the ways that representations of Asian bodies in pain "are sensationalized, aestheticized, and reproduced as desired image in American popular culture and politics" (p. 22). She also insightfully raises the ideas that political violence has constructed the Pacific "as a rejuvenating site for U.S. capitalism" (p. 17) and that the pain of Asian bodies has been forcefully forgotten. This is not a book seeking healing or reconciliation. It contributes a much-needed call to rethink the neglected trauma and pain that has been co-opted by the current neoliberal framework, stressing that "to be healed" is to "accept colonialism as a regular state of being for the colonized" (p. 25). This book allows the dead and disappeared Asian bodies to come to light, and in doing so to destabilize the postcolonial order by resisting being forgotten. It is crucial to remember the dead through forms of mourning and grievance for the purpose of preventing future violence.

Still, further questions linger around the ethics of forgetting: Is forgetting solely tied to appeasement or betrayal? How can we be cautious of fetishizing wounds and woundedness as we mourn the past? In this sense, I wish this book had pursued discussions of mourning loss vis-à-vis stopping violence, discussions of ways that victims might find within the refusal to forget a new start devoid of violence, and discussions that would allow readers to better understand the politics of mourning at both disruptive and constitutive levels. In sum, however, *Postcolonial Grief* contributes an important work of cautioning the state violence and militarism by beautifully weaving transdisciplinary archives together to produce a richly documented and mind awakening volume.

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*Chinese Migrant Workers and Employer Domination: Comparisons with Hong Kong and Vietnam*. By Kaxton Siu. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020. xvi, 232 pp. ISBN: 9789813291225 (cloth).
doi:10.1017/S0021911820004131

Kaxton Siu's new book is an impressive comparative study of garment factory workers in Hong Kong, China, and Vietnam. It provides ethnographic detail and rigorous analysis of our understanding of labor, economics, and the state with a recognition of change over time.

Siu argues that the image that most readers might have of Chinese garment factories, with young girls migrating to factories, living in dormitories, with no autonomy, is outdated. It was more accurate in the 1990s, but he argues that scholars need to see beyond what he calls the "subjugation model" (p. 6).

His study is organized into three parts. First, Siu examines Hong Kong garment workers in the 1980s and early 1990s to provide a historical counterpoint to China and Vietnam's contemporary industries. Next, he looks at factories in Shenzhen in southern China (near Hong Kong) and the growing diversity of labor control and negotiations. He ends the study by traveling to Vietnam to compare how the government does (or does not) protect its workers in the international garment industry. Throughout it all, Siu analyzes the relationship between the state and the economy, with an emphasis on gender and workers' rights in all three locales.

Siu begins with the history of garment work in Hong Kong from the late 1970s through the early 1990s. His relationship to the topic is personal: his mother was a garment worker, and he visited the factories with her as a child. He uses two life stories to provide personal and compelling stories about Hong Kong women's experiences in the garment industry. He highlights their pride in the skills they achieved, arguing against the notion that they were unskilled workers. Despite their experience and skill, macroeconomic forces shifted the factories to China, and these women entered Hong Kong's low-wage service sector in the 1990s.

The heart of the book is in chapters 3, 4, and 5, in which Siu analyzes contemporary garment factories in Shenzhen. In these chapters, he provides detailed information about gender politics, maximum hour and minimum wage laws, and the relationship between the shop floor and workers' leisure time. He opens with a study of letters written by Chinese women garment workers in the early 1990s that outline their struggles and desires. He argues that today's factory workers are more heterogeneous than they were twenty years ago, and he explores the relationship between their factory work, their social lives, and village-based networks.

Next, Siu turns to the factory floor. Siu conducted a survey of 389 factory workers, and through this tool, he learned that most knew about China's minimum wage laws but were unaware of any maximum hour laws. In fact, undercompensated overtime was a fact of life for almost all workers. He writes, "Workers simply did not believe the Chinese labor law could be so good. The content of the law contradicts their everyday working experience" (p. 96).

In contrast to the 1990s, Siu argues that there was more negotiation in the twenty-first-century Chinese factory. It continued to be difficult for Chinese workers to quit their factory jobs (because of recruitment deposits) or avoid "voluntary overtime." However, at the same time, there were also regular negotiations between workers and supervisors, demonstrating how "affective ties" added to more coercive forms of

control. He calls this "a new regime of 'conciliatory despotism'" that has "replace[d] the dormitory labor regime" (p. 146). While I imagine there was also negotiation on the shop floor in the 1990s, Siu demonstrates that management had less of an iron-clad grip on their employers than they did previously.

Finally, he turns to Vietnam. Unlike in China, more Vietnamese workers come from nearby the factory-sites, and more people migrate in family units. This means that both women and men have responsibilities outside the factory than individuals who migrate to Shenzhen. The result is that workers spend less time on-the-job in Vietnam. In contrast to China, Siu argues that the Vietnamese minimum wage law is so low as to be negligible and invisible in workers' lives. At the same time, Vietnamese workers were far more likely to go on strike than Chinese workers. (There were more than eight hundred strikes in 2011.) Siu suggests that the government tolerated this level of worker activism to increase the overall financial investment in the country without having to change its laws.

Overall, the book succeeds in integrating macro-level analysis at the state level in Hong Kong, China, and Vietnam while still providing personal stories of workers in all three locales. It also provides a strong gender analysis that emphasizes women's experiences. At times, Siu's discussions of Karl Marx, Michel Foucault, and E. P. Thompson distract somewhat from his original research. That said, the combination of comparative qualitative and quantitative methods is exemplary, and Siu succeeds in documenting larger economic trends and workers' lived experiences. *Chinese Migrant Workers and Employer Domination* is a valuable contribution for scholars of labor, migration, and capitalism in the twenty-first century.

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